U.S. Department of Education
2019 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [ ] Title I   [ ] Charter   [ ] Magnet   [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Ms. Marilyn Walther
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Eisenhower Elementary School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1460 School Street
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Indiana   PA   15701-2561
City   State   Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Indiana County

Telephone (724) 463-8566   Fax (724) 465-8612

Web site/URL https://ike.iasd.cc/   E-mail   mwalther@iasd.cc

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr Michael Vuckovich
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)   E-mail mvuckovich@iasd.cc

District Name Indiana Area School District   Tel.   (724) 463-8713
I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Mr. Walter Schroth
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

_____Date_____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.

Part I – Eligibility Certification

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state's performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.

2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2019 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.

3. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.

4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2013 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.

5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, or 2018.

6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school's application and/or rescind a school's award.

7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years.

8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.

9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.

10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.

11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Data should be provided for the most recent school year (2018-2019) unless otherwise stated.

DISTRICT

1. Number of schools in the district   4 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
   (per district designation):   1 Middle/Junior high schools
                                  1 High schools
                                  0 K-12 schools

                                  6 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

   [ ] Urban or large central city
   [ ] Suburban
   [X] Rural or small city/town

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2018 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	0	0	0
1	0	0	0
2	0	0	0
3	0	0	0
4	59	58	117
5	48	56	104
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
Total Students	107	114	221

*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of   0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
   the school (if unknown, estimate):   11 % Asian
                                        13 % Black or African American
                                        0 % Hispanic or Latino
                                        0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
                                        195 % White
                                        2 % Two or more races
                                        100 % Total

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2017 – 2018 school year: 8%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain.

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	**Answer**
(1) Number of students who transferred *to* the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	10
(2) Number of students who transferred *from* the school after October 1, 2017 until the end of the 2017-2018 school year	8
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	18
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2017	227
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.08
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	8

6. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 5 %
                                                     10 Total number ELL

   Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):
   Arabic, Spanish, Chinese, Swahili, Yoruba, French

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 39 %
   Total number students who qualify: 87

8. Students receiving special education services: <u>12</u> %

    <u>27</u> Total number of students served

    Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

<u>2</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Multiple Disabilities
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>5</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Developmental Delay	<u>17</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>2</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>20</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>1</u> Intellectual Disability	<u>1</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: <u>7</u>

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	1
Classroom teachers including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	9
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher, etc.	8
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	3
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	2

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1   <u>24:1</u>

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016	2014-2015	2013-2014
Daily student attendance	96%	95%	95%	95%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**
    Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2018.

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.
    Yes _   No X

    If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school's mission or vision statement.

We recognize that students learn in various ways and are dedicated to supporting all students in whatever way needed so they can succeed.

16. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

PART III – SUMMARY

Indiana, Pennsylvania is situated 60 miles northeast of the city of Pittsburgh. Indiana area residents enjoy the "best of both worlds" - the benefits of proximity to a major city, as well as the lifestyle and sense of community afforded by a smaller town. Many families have lived in Indiana for generations. They are mostly blue collar working class families and are generally conservative in their views. They take pride in their community and support the local family businesses. The major employers of the community are the Indiana Area School District, Indiana Regional Medical Center, Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) and S&T Bank. IUP is the largest employer, and its presence in the community offers accessibility to many educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities associated with a university town.

The borough and the region as a whole promote themselves as the "Christmas Tree Capital of the World" because the national Christmas Tree Growers Association was founded here. There are still a large number of Christmas tree farms in the area. Indiana was also the birthplace and hometown of actor Jimmy Stewart. Before Stewart's death, a museum in his memory was opened on the third floor of the local public library. A bronze statue of Stewart was erected in his honor at the county courthouse during his 75th birthday. The town annually holds a Jimmy Stewart film festival as part of the town's "It's a Wonderful Life" holiday celebration. Additionally, the county was once of the main lines of the Underground Railroad.

Eisenhower Elementary is one of four such schools in the Indiana Area School District. It is a neighborhood school and was established in 1955 as a K-6 enrollment where the majority of the students walked to school. In 2011, 6th grade was moved to the junior high. Two years later, the district reconfigured (grade realignment) its elementary schools, and Eisenhower became an intermediate school serving grades 4 and 5.

As a team, we at Eisenhower are strategic in our approach to educating the whole child. Meeting students where they are and challenging them to grow has been a particular focus for the past few years. Beginning with emotional and social aspects, we identify positive character traits each month for the students to learn about and practice. Once every five days, teachers meet with students to talk about these attributes (respect, responsibility, kindness, honesty, compassion, acceptance, friendship, character) and discuss what that looks like in practice and the importance it plays in their lives and the lives of those around them. We implemented a positive recognition system where faculty hand out paper "eagles" to students who are "caught" exhibiting these behaviors. Students then submit these eagles in a drawing to win prizes. Several students are recognized as "Elite Eagles" each month. Winners get their picture hung in the hallway, posted on the school website, posted on social media and receive a special reward that's donated from one or our local businesses such as a coupon for a free personal pan pizza, an ice cream sundae or a bowling pass.

Student growth and achievement have been our primary focus for the past few years. We've spent considerable time learning how to analyze data to improve instruction. In core subject areas, all students are taught grade level material. Adaptations and supports are put into place for students as needed. For students that are functioning below grade level additional interventions are instituted to focus on closing learning gaps. Learning support teachers co-teach and provide those supports in the regular classroom. Students who need more intensive interventions receive those supports during a daily intervention time in a smaller group setting. A gifted support teacher works with the regular classroom teacher to differentiate instruction to make sure gifted students' needs are being met. Students that are identified as gifted will also work with the gifted support teacher on enrichment projects.

It is also important to acknowledge the importance of physical activity and its impact on learning. We believe that exercising helps with memory, attention, academics and social skills. Each student enjoys 30 minutes daily of Vigorous Physical Activity (VPA) in the middle of the day. Students are also scheduled for a weekly physical education class and participate in extra events such as our All Sports Day, Elks Hoop Shoot, Punt/Pass/Kick competition, and Project Fit America. Additionally, students are encouraged to participate in a monthly at-home challenge to increase their physical activity outside of school and to promote an overall healthy lifestyle.

Eisenhower is fortunate to be located near a state university. This affords us the opportunity to take

advantage of many programs including the presence of a large English as a Second Language (ESL) community. Throughout the year, we welcome students from foreign countries and benefit from the vast cultural experiences that these students bring with them. We celebrate diversity and include this as part of our curriculum. We have an ESL family night where our students from different countries prepare presentations about their culture. They also prepare ethnic food for our students to enjoy as they learn about the various countries.

PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Core Curriculum:**

1a. Reading/English language arts:

Eisenhower has implemented a program that is a research-proven solution for a balanced literacy approach that aligns to the standards. Classrooms use whole group and differentiated small group instruction. Fountas and Pinnell assessments guide teachers in differentiating. Each student is administered a one-on-one comprehension and fluency assessment. This data is used to form guided reading groups.

With strategies and practice, teachers stress the importance of reading by putting books in the hands of students. Students read to self, read aloud, choral read, and read self-selected materials. Teachers pull small groups of students for guided reading sessions at students' instructional reading levels. Benchmark Literacy provides large group instruction, addresses reading skills, and follows up with weekly assessments. CLOSE reading techniques are utilized to mark the texts for deeper understanding which then tie into writing text dependent analyses which are also supported by science and social studies teachers. Students have been taught to go back into the text to draw evidence to support their inferences. NEWSELA, Read Works and Get Epic are online components used for independent practice, providing engaging materials to support comprehension and vocabulary development.

English, grammar, mechanics, spelling, and writing are important daily practices in which students self-monitor progress charts providing a sense of ownership. Some of the online tools used include the following: NoRedInk, IXL, Language Tool, and Spell City. Teacher-made materials fill standard holes. Writing practice is done through Google classroom assignments. Writing text-dependent analysis essays become important in late fall beginning with scaffolding and moving into independent practice.

Interventions include remediation and acceleration based on student data. i-Ready, an online component, challenges the students at their independent level, determined by a diagnostic test that is given three times a year. Students work on i-Ready while staff meets with students individually or in small groups to target student needs. Students practice vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and any other needed skills.

1b. Mathematics:

At Eisenhower, we ensure that all students are exposed to the fourth and fifth grade state standards by creating a standards map and pacing guide at each grade level. We use a variety of data ranging from unit pretests, local diagnostic assessments, and informal observations in order to design instruction that focuses on student needs and strengths as they relate to the standards.

While planning units, we implement many facets of the Universal Design for Learning where students are encouraged to monitor their progress toward individual learning goals and are given choices for how to demonstrate understanding of a topic. Students with specially designed instruction are fully included in the general education setting in co-taught classrooms. We also hold student-teacher conferences throughout the year for individual goal-setting and progress monitoring.

Our instruction incorporates the Concrete-Representational-Abstract approach to learning and teaching to develop an in-depth understanding of mathematical processes. Our students have access to concrete manipulatives while problem solving. Students work on rigorous word problems that encompass multiple skills in a small group setting while others work independently toward their unique learning objectives. Our student to Chromebook ratio is one-to-one, which allows us to creatively use programs such as ST Math, i-Ready math, and Zearn to aid in remediation and enrichment.

Resources from Eureka Math/Zearn, i-Ready, the SAS Portal, and credible online sources are used in combination with teacher-created materials that appeal to student learning styles and interests. In addition, project-based assessments are incorporated into each unit that expands our topics into real world application.

These allow our students to work toward common goals through multiple entry points.

Our primary goal is for our students to experience success in the classroom and to develop a wide repertoire of problem-solving strategies so that they have confidence in their ability to apply mathematics in their world.

1c. Science:

Eisenhower students learn to appreciate science, to explore important scientific concepts, and to develop the ability to think well by actively participating in scientific practices through their own investigations and analyses. We strive to ensure that all students are exposed to the fourth and fifth grade standards by creating a standards map and pacing guide at each grade level. Students are taught how to collect scientific data, use scientific/mathematical tools accurately, and the value of precision when conducting experiments.

Teachers spend a great deal of time analyzing past PSSA performance on the science test to find the standards and topics in which our students need more support. We then design our experiments and investigations with additional emphasis on our past "weak areas" to help our students make growth in the future. Students are encouraged to explore concepts more deeply by designing their own experiments at the conclusion of each unit.

Collaboration is a key element in the discovery process. Students are encouraged to brainstorm and discuss possible solutions to problems as they work in heterogeneous science groups in which each participant has an invaluable role. Data from pretests allow us to place students in science groups where they work successfully with individuals who have similar skills. Using this data allows us to support students in their areas of weakness. Additionally, working closely with the gifted teacher gives us the opportunity to provide challenging extensions to groups who need enrichment. We also collaborate with our local university to plan engaging trips to its planetarium and science departments. Because of the positive relationship we have with the university, our students see the value of science at multiple educational levels.

Eisenhower believes that science is a creative, analytic process. Knowledge grows when students observe and wonder about the natural world around them. Students can apply that understanding to solve real-world problems and to contribute to our global community.

1d. Social studies/history/civic learning and engagement

Despite being a small, rural town, our community is rich in cultural diversity. We encourage our students to embrace the strength of diversity by exploring how the experiences of unique individuals and ethnic groups have shaped our nation's history.

Fourth grade studies the five themes of geography (location, place, movement, human-environment interaction, and region) as they relate to our fifty states. We design and participate in virtual field trips that provide information about important landmarks and events that occurred in each region. Virtual field trips provide students an opportunity to interact with people and places from across our country; this helps all students who would not typically have the ability to do so. These experiences open their minds to different viewpoints about current events in our country. In addition, we promote the Every Kid in a Park campaign by our National Park System.

Fifth graders study the colonization of America through the Civil War, with interactive projects such as designing a colonial town and creating newspaper articles. A "living" wax museum of Revolutionary War historical figures is showcased by the students. Before becoming these historical figures, students complete rigorous research, then transform into these famous faces by dressing the part. The community is invited to learn about these prominent historical people. The fifth grade class is also fortunate to visit two historical sites, Fort Ligonier and Gettysburg.

We value the importance of historical and cultural simulations. To better understand the life of a Civil War soldier, fifth graders participate in an encampment simulation. Fourth graders have celebrated the cultural

significance of events such as the Kentucky Derby.

Eisenhower's goal is for students to become global citizens by studying our nation's past and present through hands-on experiences and to lead them in creating a positive vision for their future.

1e. For secondary schools:

1f. For schools that offer preschool for three- and four-year old students:

2. Other Curriculum Areas:

Other curriculum areas at Eisenhower are known as ¨special area¨ subjects. These subjects include Music, Art, Library, Physical Education, and Technology. All fourth and fifth grade students attend each of these special area subjects once per five-day cycle for 40 minutes.

Common Core concepts are integrated into the special area subjects in a deliberate manner. Purposeful integration allows connections to be made between general education and special area content so that concepts are introduced, reinforced, and reviewed throughout the whole school.

The intermediate library curriculum builds upon information literacy and digital citizenship skills introduced to primary learners, while encouraging a love of reading. Through collaborative research projects, learners hone essential skills such as note-taking, paraphrasing, citing sources, and synthesizing information from a plethora of print and digital resources to expand knowledge. For example, while working on an American Revolution Wax Museum project, fifth grade students draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research, applying grade-level reading standards for literature and informational texts.

Throughout technology class, students learn and utilize word processing, presentation, and spreadsheet software to summarize, organize, and present information. Students demonstrate a grade-appropriate command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when utilizing the aforementioned software programs. Students also practice the ability to choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely. Students draw on information from multiple print or digital sources, demonstrating the ability to locate an answer to a question quickly or to solve a problem efficiently. Students utilize spreadsheet software to enter text and data and to create formulas to calculate, interpret and evaluate numerical expressions using order of operations. Creating and manipulating charts and graphs in spreadsheet programs allows students to practice interpreting various presentations of information.

Digital citizenship is also explored during library class through lessons on Internet safety and etiquette. Fourth grade students recall relevant information from experiences or gather relevant information from print and digital sources, take notes and categorize information, and provide a list of sources while researching to create a digital presentation on a U.S. state. Throughout the year, students are assessed on their ability to recognize the need for information and skills to locate, evaluate, and synthesize information.

In physical education class, students utilize mathematical skills when they keep score, monitor time, and learn the dimensions of various fields and courts. Mathematics is also incorporated in the daily warmup by using skip counting. Students show an understanding of reading comprehension and the ability to respond to informational text by following instructions read on a task card while in station work and appropriately demonstrating what is being asked. Other English Language Arts (ELA) concepts are supported when participating in monthly fitness challenges as students check for spelling and grammar when completing their log which they submit. Science concepts are incorporated when discussing the human body and how to keep it healthy with exercise and fitness. By engaging in games played around the world and the history of these sports, students learn about aspects of Social Studies and cultural diversity.

The visual arts curriculum involves studying art history, criticism, aesthetics, and production. Through a variety of learning activities, students are provided opportunities to explore both themselves and the world around them. Fourth grade students are often required to use place-value understanding and properties of operations to determine how long ago an artwork was created. When studying the science of perspective, students draw lines and angles and identify these in two-dimensional figures to create the illusion of space and depth. As students self-assess their work, they use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform the reader of how different elements of art were employed in the work. Fifth-grade students demonstrate their knowledge of equivalency to add and subtract fractions when they use quarter and half-inch measurements to draw a portrait. When they write a formal art critique, students introduce and describe an artwork using domain-specific vocabulary, group related information about the piece in a logical manner, provide opinions that are supported by facts, and provide a concluding statement related to their opinion.

The above narrative highlights a few of the many ways in which our school's other curriculum areas support students' acquisition of essential skills and knowledge.

3. Special Populations:

At Eisenhower, special student populations are supported within the general education curriculum through a variety of instructional supports. All students are provided differentiated instruction within the least restrictive environment. For example, teachers may present material in various ways, provide pre-teaching, re-teaching, repeating directions, additional examples and non-examples, and alternative computer access. When supports are provided to students in the general education curriculum, they are able to stay in heterogeneous grouped classrooms and receive grade level instruction. Using co-teaching as an instructional delivery approach, we are able to provide a unified service delivery system for meeting student needs of varying abilities.

Fountas and Pinnell reading assessments are given to each student, and we use the results to formulate our small groups for guided reading. Guided reading rotations are need-based and Learning Support, ESL, and classroom teachers meet with the students who need the most support more often throughout the week. By gathering formative assessment data from anecdotal records, teachers can target specific skill areas during this small group instruction. We also use the i-Ready diagnostic assessment and other assessment results to identify gaps, to gather information about the students, to provide instructional feedback, to guide and determine flexible groups, and to adjust ongoing teaching to improve their achievement. In both reading and math, intervention lessons are developed to provide opportunities for reteaching and extension activities. The data-driven instruction is scaffolded so that students can practice skills with support in order to be successful. In addition, all students, including students with disabilities, gifted students, and English Language Learners (ELL), participate in a daily intervention/enrichment time called seminar. During this time, students work in small, homogeneous, flexible groups which are intended to fill the gaps in their learning as determined by formative assessment data and student needs. Students are given diagnostic assessments to identify areas of strengths and needs. Specific interventions such as the Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) and Wilson's Fundations are used for reading instruction that is explicit and systematic. These research-based interventions include structured, carefully sequenced, and well-organized lessons that provide daily opportunities for students to practice at their instructional level.

Furthermore, various components of the students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are based on the results of these assessments. Continuous assessments, such as the Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI) and the Fuchs and Fuchs Computation Probes, are administered to monitor progress on the students' goals, objectives, and mastery of key skills and to make instructional adjustments as needed. The ongoing use of assessments for students with disabilities is critical when aligning instruction and intervention to ensure ongoing growth and success. ELL students also receive support based on data gathered from formative, summative and diagnostic testing. In addition to the assessments adopted by our school and district, ELL students participate in annual WIDA testing. The assessment results are used to determine students' proficiency levels in each of the language domains in order to determine what students are able to do and where they need the most support. This information guides teachers as they differentiate instruction.

PART V – SCHOOL SUPPORTS

1. School Climate/Culture:

Eisenhower believes that if students are happy coming to school, they will be successful in their academic, social, and emotional growth. To foster happiness, we utilize a variety of strategies.

First and foremost, we value weekly class meetings; during which we discuss positive character traits. We want our students to value citizenship and to follow the OLWEUS motto, "do the right thing." All students are given t-shirts as a visual reminder of our core beliefs. In addition, we have posters displayed in each of our classrooms that reinforce expected behaviors such as being kind and respectful.

Our school-wide building motto is "Eisenhower students are positive, prepared, and polite." We explain our mantra in depth and how we can work together to make Eisenhower a special place for all students, faculty, and staff members to learn and grow together. Throughout the year, when students are displaying these traits, faculty and staff reward the students with an eagle coupon. The eagles are collected for weekly drawings. Student names are drawn from each grade level to select a reward of their choice.

To honor individual students for their monthly efforts, we select Elite Eagles, or students of the month. These students receive small prizes and coupons for their efforts. Their pictures are also displayed in our hallways with hope that these students will continue to be role models for their peers. We also reward all students who consistently "do the right thing" each month with a student-selected activity such as lunch in the classroom, extra recess, and Makerspace explore time.

We have weekly team meetings to discuss strategies to support our struggling students and to share successes in our classrooms. We implement individualized behavior plans for students who are in need of further assistance. We believe that all students bring something special to our school, and these school-wide support systems help us to encourage them to stay on a positive path and to reach their highest potential.

Teachers are a valued part of our school community. We take time to care for one another and to celebrate milestones in our careers and person lives. We have recognition breakfasts to celebrate new babies and weddings. Our PTA provides breakfasts and lunches to show appreciation. The principal provides luncheons and small tokens to say thank you for their efforts. We meet weekly as a team, and teacher input is solicited in developing programs and procedures. Teachers are given the flexibility and freedom to use their talents and creativity to organize and develop programs that enhance the educational experience for our students. The principal has an "open door" policy and is truly interested in the well being of the staff.

2. Engaging Families and Community:

Eisenhower faculty and staff value the home/school/community connection and whenever possible look for ways to collaborate with all stakeholders. We recognize that including families in a child's education is an important component to a student's academic success. There are several avenues the school uses to involve families and community. We work closely with the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to provide engaging activities for our students and their families. Parents are an integral part of planning our Academic Project Fair, Reflection (Arts) Program, book fairs, holiday workshop, Father/Son/Mother/Daughter banquets, after school Show and Snack movie events, and community blood drive.

Our PTA's website and Facebook page highlight students and their accomplishments. The principal uses Twitter to showcase activities, projects and events about our students and school. Our district/school website is another avenue used to disperse important upcoming information, initiatives and accomplishments.

Teachers are encouraged to communicate with parents about their child's behavior and academic needs as well as successes. We run an after-school math program for students who need extra help. For our ESL

population, we offer an after-school tutoring program as additional support for our ELL population.

The school has a strong collaborative partnership with the local university. Academic field trips, guest professors, literacy interns, and sports are just a few of the ways we collaborate to bring valuable educational experiences to our kids.

Students organize and participate in numerous fundraisers throughout the year to raise money for local charities. Helping others and giving back to the community are important characteristics we encourage in our students. We believe developing empathy and social awareness is just as important as academics.

One collaborative project that we are very proud of is our Math Walk. A Math Walk is an event that allows students to experience mathematics in their community. Students take what they've learned in the classroom and apply it to real world situations. Taking mathematics outside the classroom helps them to see the practical applications of math and its importance in their life. Students look for patterns, estimate quantities, and calculate distances, areas and volumes. They also compare objects and their properties. Many of our local businesses participate in this event. Banks, restaurants, theaters, travel agency, fire department, library, insurance agencies, YMCA, courthouse and other local businesses collaborate with us to create meaningful and engaging activities for our students to learn how math is used at their establishment. This project is positively received in the community and enjoyed by the students.

3. **Professional Development:**

Eisenhower involves all staff in ongoing professional development to support students and increase student achievement. Our professional development initiatives are in sync with district initiatives. A Needs Assessment is administered every three years to evaluate the District's Professional Education Plan. Additionally, an Act 48 committee, consisting of educators and administrators, meets regularly to discuss emerging needs not immediately identified in the triennial needs assessment. Analysis of formative and summative student achievement data is conducted to determine specific areas of weakness. Professional development is provided for staff in the areas identified "in need of improvement." Administrators attend professional development opportunities along with teachers to provide support and to promote effective implementation with fidelity and accountability through supervision. Principals form collaborative teams to support the implementation of new initiatives and to provide collaborative opportunities to promote professional growth for their faculty and/or teams.

Teachers and administrators attend workshops sponsored by Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) and attend conferences in their specific content area. Upon returning from workshops, our professionals communicate their new learning to the entire faculty or small groups of the faculty. In addition to building-level and department-level meetings, all staff members who attend conferences and workshops have an opportunity to share salient points through session offerings during our personalized professional development days. This personalized approach to professional development affords each educator an opportunity to select sessions most relevant to him/her. The district only approves conference and workshop attendance if the theme aligns with district initiatives, student achievement, and/or standards-based instructional practices.

Beyond district initiative professional development, the principal of Eisenhower looks at the needs of the building to identify additional areas. As a team, Optimizing Inclusionary Practices (OIP) was identified as an area of significant importance when looking at student growth. We meet monthly with people from the PaTTAN and the local Intermediate Unit (IU) to learn strategies and to identify best practices to successfully include and support all students in the regular education classroom.

Analyzing data is another area where we have focused our efforts. Learning to effectively use tools such as the Standards Aligned System (SAS) and data from Pennsylvania System of School Assessments (PSSA), Pennsylvania Value-Added Assessment System (PVAAS), Fountas & Pinnell and i-Ready Math and Reading to make instructional decisions has had a significant impact in supporting our students.

We also work on school climate and positive behavior supports. We know that in order for a child to learn,

he or she needs to be ready to learn. We meet weekly as a faculty to work on implementing researched-based best practices to address the social and emotional needs of our students.

4. **School Leadership:**

Eisenhower operates under a collaborative framework. The principal and staff work together to develop building initiatives and procedures. Weekly meetings with staff focus on student growth and achievement and also provide a time to update and monitor implementation of programs. Fostering positive and supportive relationships with each other and with our students is paramount to our success. We have worked purposefully to establish a safe and trusting work environment. This culture promotes open communication and allows teachers to speak freely, to take risks and to share ideas resulting in effective solutions. The principal embraces input from students, teachers and parents and views them as an essential part of a great school culture. This transformational leadership style has motivated staff to accept change and to implement reflective practices in order to improve their instructional practices. Teachers feel supported and empowered to take risks and to explore ways to improve their teaching practices.

Collectively, we've identified two main areas of focus: data and a positive school culture. We believe that a positive school atmosphere will affect everything that goes on in the school. We celebrate successes and recognize positive behavior and academic achievements. We spend a significant amount of time teaching expectations and modeling desired behaviors. Social-emotional learning (SEL) has become an integral part of our daily routine. Teachers are encouraged to include activities that help students to develop qualities such as respect, empathy and responsibility. We are presently shifting our practices to recognizing and praising positive behaviors and successes.

Analyzing data and using that data to plan instruction has been a focus for the past few years. We began very simply by using exit slips as a way of checking to see if the lesson objectives were being met. Using this data was eye opening as to whether students were actually learning the material that was being taught. We spent time learning how to differentiate instruction to meet individual student needs. We looked at different types of assessments and how to use that information to support instruction in the classroom. Teams met regularly to plan lessons and to discuss instructional strategies. Once we had a plan for increasing student achievement, we focused our discussions on student growth. Teachers participated in professional development to learn about PVAAS. One-on-one conversations between the principal and the teacher looking at PVAAS data have given teachers insight into how their students are performing while under their care.

Part VI – STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Using data to drive instruction and decision-making has been key in our quest to improve student growth and achievement. When we transitioned from gathering data to truly analyzing the data and using it to drive our interventions, that's when we began to see true change in our instructional practices. Scheduling a time for teachers to meet as a team to discuss and plan around the data was the first step in that direction. Teachers learned what to do with the data and how powerful that information could be in transforming their instruction to meet the needs of all students. In addition to using that information to differentiate within the classroom, we wanted to drill down and address the learning gaps we were seeing in our students. We chose i-Ready as the educational tool because it provided a diagnostic component as well as an individualized online instruction piece. The customized reports on student performance and progress provided an effective way for us to monitor student growth and progress. It provided the teachers the support they needed to meet the challenge of differentiation.

We administer the i-Ready diagnostic test three time a year (fall, winter, spring). To use this tool effectively, we scheduled a 40 minute intervention period every school day called Seminar. During this time, there are three main areas of focus. First, students work independently on their personalized online lessons. We want to make sure that any gaps in learning are addressed. Additionally, if a student is performing above grade level in Reading or Math, enrichment lessons will be prescribed. Second, the teacher will use the data from the diagnostic test to determine areas of weakness and provide mini lessons to small groups of students. This provides another avenue to strengthen understanding and target specific skills where students are struggling. Third, teachers conference with students about their progress. This is the "glue" that ties everything together. Based on the diagnostic results, the teacher and student sit together to set goals. Every two weeks, they revisit those goals and talk about the students' progress. Students learn how to track their progress and take responsibility for their learning. We found that when the students are involved in setting their goals, they become excited about their progress and become motivated to do well. We also recognize the importance of rewards and, as a building we set i-Ready "passed lessons" goals and celebrate them with a special reward.